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CHARITABLE CO-OPERATION

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CHARITABLE CO-OPERATION.

About the year 1880, it occurred to different groups of people in a number of American cities to start a new charity. This was, in itself, no unusual thing, but their reason was peculiar. They started a new charity because there were so many already. Religious and secular activity in philanthropy had created, in our large cities, many different agencies. However well these may have been organized internally, they were not organized with reference to each other, and this fact led to the formation of charity organization societies.

The seal of the New York society illustrates its chief object. The seal represents a chain each link of which is some form of charitable activity. The links are marked "official and private relief," "churches and missions," "relief societies," "homes and asylums," "hospitals and dispensaries," "friendly visitation," "provident schemes and fresh air"; and then, binding these links together in a circle, is a band inscribed "Charity Organization Society of the City of New York."

This conception of co-operation would seem to be broad enough and difficult enough of realization to satisfy any one, but it has been immeasurably broadened by the charitable practice of every successful charity organization society. Co-operation on the official side, as it concerns the relations of charitable bodies, is still very important; but co-operation as a working principle applicable to every act of the charity worker is fundamental. It may be well, therefore, to consider this daily habit of co-operation in some detail before turning to the question of co-operation among charities.

I. CO-OPERATION WITH THE POOR AND THEIR NEIGHBORS.

When one points out that the field of charitable co-operation is not limited to charities alone, but extends to everything affecting the life of the poor, and to the poor themselves, the proposition seems almost

self-evident; but its hearty acceptance marks an important and comparatively recent change in charitable ways of thinking.

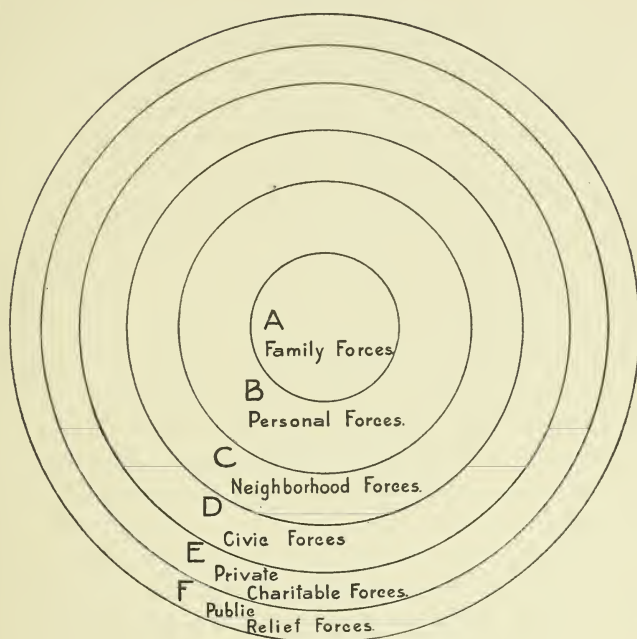
The success of this more personal conception of co-operation depends upon the attitude of mind of the individual worker. That first moment in which any applicant and any charity agent confront each other is a solemn one, for the applicant's future depends in no small degree upon what the agent happens to *think* about the resources of charity. The record of one such interview has been brought to my attention, in which, after the usual names, ages, etc., the agent had made this entry: "Nothing unfavorable could be found out about this family. Gave fifty cents." That closed the record, but it led to interesting speculations as to the worker's point of view.

The series of circles on the following page, with the accompanying list of forces, is an attempt to picture, though in very crude fashion, the resources of the modern charity worker in his efforts to befriend families in distress. The family life is pictured by a circle at the centre. Then surrounding this are circles representing, first, the personal forces that lie outside the family, but nearest to it,—the neighborhood forces, the civic forces, the private charitable forces, and, last, the public relief forces of the community. The resources of which the untrained and unskilful exclusively think—the groceries, fuel, clothing, and cash at the charity worker's command—are only a small part of his actual resources, of course; and even the list given under this diagram is very incomplete. It may be indefinitely extended for any given city.

The diagram assumes three things: First, that the charity worker really knows the family he is trying to help. A painstaking investigation is supposed to have brought to light the resources mentioned in the diagram in so far as they affect the given family. Second, that, in choosing forces with which to co-operate, the worker will select those that are nearest to the family and most natural for them rather than the forces that lie nearest to and are most natural for him. Third,—and may the day be hastened when this explanation is no longer necessary!—it is assumed that not for one moment has he allowed the completion of his investigation or the drawing up of his plan of co-operation to interfere with the prompt relief of urgent need.

All city families, rich and poor alike, are surrounded by the forces indicated within these circles; and the failure of the four groups

DIAGRAM OF FORCES WITH WHICH THE CHARITY WORKER MAY CO
OPERATE.



A.—*Family Forces.*

Capacity of each member for
Affection.
Training.
Endeavor.
Social development.

B.—*Personal Forces.*

Kindred.
Friends.

C.—*Neighborhood Forces.*

Neighbors, landlords, tradesmen.
Former and present employers.
Clergymen, Sunday-school teachers, fellow church members.
Doctors.

Trade-unions, fraternal and benefit societies, social clubs, fellow-workmen.

Libraries, educational clubs, classes, settlements, etc.

Thrift agencies, savings-banks, stamp-savings, building and loan associations.

D.—*Civic Forces.*

School-teachers, truant officers.
Police, police magistrates, probation officers, reformatories.

Health department, sanitary inspectors, factory inspectors.
Postmen.
Parks, baths, etc.

E.—*Private Charitable Forces.*

Charity organization society.
Church of denomination to which family belongs.
Benevolent individuals.
National, special, and general relief societies.
Charitable employment agencies and work-rooms.
Fresh-air society, children's aid society, society for protection of children, children's homes, etc.
District nurses, sick-diet kitchens, dispensaries, hospitals, etc.
Society for suppression of vice, prisoner's aid society, etc.

F.—*Public Relief Forces.*

Almshouses.
Outdoor poor department.
Public hospitals and dispensaries.

of forces — family, personal, neighborhood, and civic — to resist the downward pull of gravitation would render any family dependent. In every family asking charitable aid, therefore, the natural resources have so far failed as to send its members crashing down through circles B, C, D, to E, the circle of private charity. The problem of charity is to get them back into A again by rallying the forces that lie between. It has sometimes seemed worth while, in puzzling cases, to advise the charity agent to go to work as deliberately as this: Taking the list of forces in each circle, to check off each one that has been tried, and then make a note of ways in which to use the others. The device is mechanical; but, when a family continues long in E, the football of circumstance, helped “a little” by many agencies and individuals, and taught to believe that a wretched appearance and dependent attitude will make the most effective appeal, then any device seems justified that will help to restore the family to independence and self-respect.

Let us consider the contents of these circles, bearing in mind that the best force to use, other things being equal, is the force that lies nearest the family.

Circle A, Family Forces. — The first resource of charity, and the one most commonly overlooked, is within the needy family itself. The charity worker's first question should be: What powers of self-help are there here that may at once take the place of charitable relief, or else may be developed by charity to take its place hereafter? What is the capacity of each member for endeavor, for training, for social development, for affection? Is any one able-bodied? If so, the able-bodiedness is, in itself, a resource to be developed. Can any one be taught to earn more or to earn? Can any one here be helped to more effective living by a social pleasure that I can throw in his way? Is there any affection latent here that I can appeal to, and so put new heart into a discouraged worker?

In other words, what the family can do, what it can learn, what it can enjoy, what it can feel,—these are the important things. In these we have the greatest resource of charity and the most important field of co-operation. The charity worker with the co-operative spirit is always thinking of things he can do together *with* the family, and the worker who lacks this spirit can think only of things to do *for* them.

The development of aids to this department of co-operation should

be encouraged in every possible way. We need more manual training, more social clubs, more charities with the thought of education in them; and, above all, we need to have the family idea emphasized in all such work. The old cry of "Save the children!" must be superseded by the new cry of "Save the family!" for we cannot save the one without the other.

Circle B, Personal Forces.—All who have established relations with the family that are genuinely personal, though they may be classified in the diagram under neighborhood or civic or charitable forces, deserve to be included in this circle. The church, for instance, may become a personal force of the greatest potency, touching the life of the family more nearly than any save the nearest kindred; but, too often, it allows itself to drop to circle E, where it is regarded by the poor as merely a source of supplies.

This circle of personal forces is the strategic point in charity work, but charities may be prevented from entering it by two lacks,—lack of personal knowledge of the poor and lack of personal interest. We have all been the victims of the official who protects himself by a highly impersonal manner; and, even when we have understood, we have been offended. The poor, who do not understand, are doubly offended when the charity worker's attitude is impersonal. It is possible, of course, to let our insistence upon personal service degenerate into cant. Not all personal service is effective: it may be unquestionably personal and also very mischievous. But, after making due allowance for the note of exaggeration, what impersonal service can ever be effective in dependent families? There may be whole classes of dependents whose lot could be bettered by wholesale measures. But family problems are so complex, they demand such careful manipulation; and that charity will be most successful in dealing with them which so arranges its work as to avoid overcrowding any one worker with too many details. The most successful continuous work will usually be done by volunteers acting under intelligent leadership and with a trained paid agent.

The Boston Associated Charities regards one hundred and twenty-five new families a year as the limit that can be successfully cared for by one trained agent working with a group of volunteers. Charitable work so arranged and done in the right spirit becomes a personal force in the lives of the poor. Placed securely in circle B, it is in a position to co-operate effectively with the family and with its friends and neighbors.

Relatives sometimes lose sight of their less fortunate kindred through no deliberate neglect; and kindred should always be turned to, not only for relief, but for information and advice. Their suggestions are often most useful.

The Fulham Committee of the London Charity Organization Society made an interesting analysis, a few years ago, of the sources of relief in pension cases. It was found that 29 per cent. of the pension money administered by them was obtained from charitable individuals who were strangers to the pensioners, 22 per cent. came from old employers, 16 per cent. from charities, 13 per cent. from friends, 12 per cent. from relatives, 6 per cent. from clubs, and 2 per cent. from the clergy. The large percentages from relatives, friends, and old employers are very striking; but we must remember, in comparing this work with our own, that many ties of kindred are severed in this country by the sweep of the Atlantic Ocean, and that the relations of employer, neighbor, and fellow-workman are all rendered less permanent by our migratory habits. English charity can develop the resources of neighborhood and of kindred more easily. It is well to note, however, that England has also furnished us with some striking examples of a perverted charitable practice in this regard. Just before the reform of the English poor law the following bill was presented by an overseer to be paid out of the rates:—

To Elizabeth W., a present for her kindness to her father	5s. 0d.
To Lucy A., for looking after her mother when ill	3s. 6d.
To Mary A., for sitting up at night with her father	2s. 0d.

Let local conditions be what they may, they can always be made worse by a charity official with such views as these.

Circle C, Neighborhood Forces.—Families often receive a great deal of neighborly help before becoming applicants for charity. The local tradesmen and landlords, especially those who sublet, have given credit, neighbors have been kind and helpful; and these local resources have been more or less exhausted before the aid of charity has been called in. On the other hand, the neighborhood feeling seems to die out in sections of the city in which charitable relief is most obtainable. During the blizzard of 1899 charity workers in Baltimore found three times as many cases of absolute destitution on the side of the city in which were situated most of the well-to-do residences and rich churches.

With sophisticated people the pressure of social influence, regulating their standard of life and conduct, comes not so much from the immediate neighborhood in which they live as from a wider circle of friendship and acquaintance. But the unsophisticated are still very sensitive to neighborhood influences. The social settlement is one of the forces that have recognized and made good use of this fact.

A wise use of neighborhood forces is also the basis of success in the district plan adopted by our larger charity organization societies. The district agent and district committee that know best the normal life of their district will deal most wisely with its abnormal conditions. A good background of experience of the normal life of poor people is a district agent's best safeguard against mistake. Then, too, the friendly acquaintance with doctors and employers and tradesmen, the quiet coming and going about one's daily work, bring with it the best possible co-operation of an unofficial kind. The good agent reads the interplay of social forces within his district as from an open book, and no impatience with the mischievous and evil tendencies working therein can blind him to the human and hopeful side.

Circle D, Civic Forces.—The civic representatives within the district are important neighborhood forces. For better or worse, they wield an influence that no charity equals,—for better, because good teachers, good policemen, all good city officials coming in contact with the poor, are doing a quiet and effective service in their behalf that many charitable people have no conception of; for worse, because the poor are so entirely at the mercy of bad officials. A district agent will need all his courage and faith when he finds that policy-shops, "speak-easies," and immoral houses are receiving in his district the protection of the police and of the magistrates. Sometimes he is fairly overwhelmed by a sense of the shamelessness of civic power so used against the most helpless class of citizens, and nothing seems worth while until all these agents of corruption can be swept away by a general uprising of good people. But the worst thing about good people is their unwillingness to work hard at small tasks, and district work is made up of a multiplicity of small tasks. The corrupt politician's success is due to the fact that he has worked hard at the weary details of building up a district plan of his own. The ward worker needs no diagrams to explain to him a method of co-operation with which he has long been familiar. It is time that the charitable took a leaf from their book, and used for a good purpose

the neighborhood forces that these self-seekers have employed with such energy and persistence.

But individual officials are often better than the system under which they work. The reformer loses nothing by recognizing this fact. In a sense, they are victims, too; and no one of them can be too insignificant to be worth winning over to wise views about charitable relief. One of the most helpful neighborhood workers that the writer ever met was a Tammany truant officer, and a part of his helpfulness could be traced to the patience and tact of the charity organization agent in his district.

Circle E, Private Charitable Forces.—The relation of the forces within circle E to each other is so important a part of this subject that its treatment is reserved for a separate section. The question that most concerns us here is the order in which charitable agencies should be used in the care of needy families. Some of the best work can be done with applicants that have asked for charitable aid for the first time, if the agency appealed to is careful to protect these from contact with many charities, and secure the needed aid from the most natural sources. But in another and large class of families natural sources are insufficient; and the family's own capacities can be developed, if at all, only very slowly and with great patience. These families must be given relief, and in some cases for a long while. And here we have one of the most important problems of co-operation; for the *way* in which this help is given,—its source, its amount, its degree of flexibility, its greater or less association with friendly influences, its insistence upon or neglect of possible self-help,—all these things decide whether the relief shall be a strong lever to uplift the family or a dead weight to drag it down. The unintelligent administration of private relief has drawn many a family into permanent dependence in circle F upon public relief.

When, therefore, a choice of sources of help must be made, it cannot be too often repeated that we should choose the charitable sources best adapted to deal adequately with the particular need, and not the sources that we ourselves happen to like or find it easiest to use. Charity workers get into the habit of using certain combinations of agencies that come readily to mind or that give them little trouble. For any given family there is only one best possible combination, there are a dozen second bests. It is our duty to find the best.

If a family has held membership in a church for a long while and

has regarded the church as a part of its normal life, then that church becomes a perfectly natural and neighborly source of help when the family is in distress. But, where all church connection has lapsed, a church of the denomination to which one or both heads of the family formerly belonged is a more natural source of help than a general relief society. The national organizations for relief also take precedence of general relief societies. And better than either (though this is still a disputed question) is relief procured from a charitable stranger, who will contribute a sum for a specific purpose, and take an interest in the result of its expenditure.

Circle F, Public Relief Forces.—Public relief is the best possible form of relief for some classes of dependants; but there are many reasons, into which it is impossible to enter here, for believing that public relief to families (public outdoor relief, as it is usually called) is, of all forms of relief, the most difficult to use as an incentive to self-help and independence. A number of our larger cities have abolished public outdoor relief, and others are trying to do so; but, wherever it still exists, the charity worker should strive to keep poor families "off the overseers' books" and out of circle F.

Those who have labored long in charitable work may be inclined to question a classification of social forces that places charity so low in the scale. But this diagram takes no account of the large classes of dependants and defectives not living in families. To most of these charity must be, so far as we can now see, the only resource. The hopeful thing about family life is that it is surrounded by so many resources besides those that can be described as charitable. The recognition of this fact, while it imposes upon charity a more delicate and self-effacing task, greatly enlarges the field and the importance of its operations. So far from belittling charity, this view would seem to strengthen its claim to recognition as a great social force.

From the charity worker who reported of a family, "Nothing unfavorable; gave fifty cents," up to the best modern type of professional worker, who patiently strives to develop, by co-operation, all possibilities of help within and without the family, is a far cry. One wonders how long the charitable public will tolerate paid agents of the first type, who are nothing but dispensers of ineffectual doles, when it is now possible to secure the services of devoted and well-trained men and women, whose treatment of distress would be helpful and thorough. One wonders, too, how long the work of a charitable society

will be measured by the number of tons, pounds, or yards of stuff that it has dispensed. The only test of charitable work in families is the test suggested in this analysis of charity's resources; namely, the number of families lifted out of circle E and placed beyond the need of charity in a normal family life.

II.—CO-OPERATION AMONG CHARITIES.

To say that the charities of a community should work together harmoniously is to make a statement so obvious that it sounds almost foolish, but to bring about this harmonious relation is a task so stupendous that only workers of large faith and tireless patience can succeed in it. Heart-sick must the charity worker often be who is striving with all his might to make dependent families independent, for he must find himself thwarted at many a turn by a philanthropic activity that is as irresponsible and mischievous as it is well-meaning.

Let us suppose that he has just succeeded, after repeated failures, in persuading the heads of a begging family to take honest work, when at the critical moment a new charitable sewing circle or an aid society discovers the family, lavishes supplies upon them, and the old speculative fever is rekindled. Or suppose he has secured a place for the eldest girl, where she will not earn at once, but where she will learn a good trade; and then the leading relief society suddenly decides to make aid conditional upon this child's earning something immediately at work in which there is no future for her. Or suppose the curly-headed boy, who has been kept from school and sent out to beg, has been so successful in winning money from thoughtless passers-by that he has fallen into bad ways, and the charity worker feels that the boy's salvation depends upon a complete change; but at this juncture the magistrate and the church visitor, touched by the tears of his mother, who needs "his earnings," help to get him off, and the family fortunes continue to drift. But one does not have to suppose such things: they are occurring all around us every day. They are not so bad [as they were,—the tide has turned; but they are still bad enough.

Not so many years ago the charitable situation was like this: Conceive of twenty doctors dosing the same case at the same time, without consultation and each in his own way. Our medical code of ethics forbids such a state of things, but its results could be no more

disastrous among the sick than were our charitable practices among the poor. In none of the large cities was there any charitable code of ethics,—in some there is none to-day,—and a sort of philanthropic free riot prevailed. Figures may give us some conception of the magnitude of the danger. New York's new directory of charities describes, for Manhattan and the Bronx, nearly twenty-three hundred separate agencies, and for Brooklyn another thousand. Boston has a thousand, Baltimore about nine hundred, Philadelphia about twenty-four hundred. If, in these cities, each charity continued to do that which was right in its own eyes, and recognized no obligation to others working in the same field, the poor would suffer cruelly. All other arguments for charitable co-operation sink into insignificance beside this one, that our unwillingness to pull together causes such unnecessary suffering among the poor.

Fortunately, the tide has turned. Every city having a live charity organization society is supplied with an agency that will gladly serve as a means of communication among charities. No one has any excuse now for working in the dark, for the facts may be had. Only those who know intimately the history of earlier years can realize what this has accomplished. To young workers, just joining the ranks, many things must still seem disheartening; and it is a pity that they cannot grasp at once the significance of these slow changes, for the long view would be cheering. In nothing would the change seem so marked as in our willingness to co-operate with the poor themselves and with their neighbors.

The writer has been tempted to change the series of circles illustrating the forces with which we may co-operate into a second diagram, showing the view of a charity director of the old unco-operative type. In the second figure the central circle of the series would be occupied by the director himself; the next would contain his charitable society; the next, the subscribers to the same; the next, the big figures that make such an impression on the subscribers; and, last of all, somewhere on the remote circumference—little known and little understood—would appear the poor people, the beneficiaries of his charity.

Now the secret of effective co-operation is to bring about a revolution in this attitude of mind. The attitude is not so common as it used to be; but, wherever it still exists, there is no more effective bar to co-operation. It is not enough, for charities to refrain from saying

disagreeable things about each other; it is not enough for them to make commercial contracts, dividing the burdens of investigation or relief. Real co-operation implies the hearty working together of those who are striving, with convictions held in common, toward some definite object. We have already seen that this definite object should be the restoration of as many poor families as possible to a position of independence. Some one has said that the greatest discovery of modern education is the child. We might paraphrase this by saying that the greatest discovery of modern charity is the poor family. That Scriptural lesson in proportion points the way for us,—“Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.” When charities seek first the restoration of the dependant with energy and devotion, all the details of co-operation, falling easily and naturally into their right places, shall be added unto them.

If the highest co-operation is based upon agreement as to principles, such agreement is still a matter of slow growth. We must not expect people to change suddenly their whole theory with regard to poverty and its relief, because it does not happen to agree with ours. But out of a sincere interest in the poor, and a working together over individual problems, may come this higher co-operation if we take pains to make our treatment of every individual family a means to this end. Thoroughly efficient case work becomes our best stepping-stone. The patient unravelling of each individual problem, the quiet avoidance of showy schemes and boastful talk, the willingness to serve both the co-operative and the unco-operative, will surely win not only respect, but fellowship in the long run. It is best to say very little to other charitable bodies about co-operating until the habit is well established in our own daily practice; and, even then, the less formally we begin, the better.

“We are willing enough,” says Mrs. Dunn Gardner, writing of her London fellow-workers, “to have a try to organize some large institution, or local charity, or parish meeting, or benevolent society; but, when it becomes a question of organizing individuals,—that is to say, of convincing them, one by one, that our principles are true, and of inducing them to guide their action by these principles,—we are most of us inclined to shirk the task. I believe myself that the wholesale system of doing things is as false when applied to organization as when applied to relief, and that important bodies can only be

won over to our side by carefully and thoroughly dealing with the individuals who compose them."

No one should be astonished to find that the method of dealing thoroughly with each poor family, as it has been described in this paper, applies equally well to our dealings with charities. To co-operate with the poor, we must know them. This is the first step in co-operating with a charity,—to know its history, its objects, and its limitations. We reveal our lack of interest and sympathy when we ask charities to do things that they were never intended to do. An energetic young doctor once said to the writer, "I just hated your society when I was on our hospital staff, for it always fell to my lot to visit the applicants for admission; and one of your agents, whose district was at the other end of the city, was forever writing about people whom I found to be in the last stages of some incurable disease." The agent in question had a thousand virtues; but the ability to put herself in another's place, to understand the limitations of a poor family or of a charity, was not one of them. She had the misfortune to be an insulator, and co-operation did not thrive in that particular district until she had resigned.

If we were to formulate the experience acquired from working with the poor into three maxims about working with the charitable, the first maxim would be that we must know a charity before we can co-operate with it. We must give ourselves up to a sympathetic appreciation of whatever is best in it before we can hope to get the best out of it. And the second maxim would grow naturally out of the first. When we have turned over to another charity a task that is clearly theirs, we must trust them to do it, and do it well. People often get unduly nervous about their work, and want either to do it all themselves or else to supervise it very closely. This state of mind kills co-operation. We must trust others; and, in the third place, we must teach them to trust us by a scrupulous care in keeping our promises. If we have said that we will do a thing, it should be known to be as good as done.

Humiliating to acknowledge, but beyond dispute, is the fact that the charitable subscriber is a cause of strife. The subscriber himself is not wholly without blame. In his efforts to escape from the appeals of two agencies, whose work is more or less closely allied, he has been known to say to each that he prefers to give to the other. Then the charities (being, like the subscriber, distinctly human) have

become embittered against each other by these tactics. If their directors would only reason the matter out, they must realize that there is no fixed sum set aside by any community for charitable purposes. The amount can be increased or decreased at any time. It does not follow that, as the work of one charity becomes better and more favorably known, the subscriptions to others will fall off. Good work, well done and intelligently explained, wins financial support; and it may be affirmed with equal certainty that an unfriendly attitude among a city's charities loses financial support to every one of them. Such rivalry becomes a public scandal: all thoughtful people are disgusted by it. Wherever the impression has got abroad that the leading charities of a community will not co-operate with each other, and that their work, in consequence, is antiquated in method and unfortunate in result, the younger generation of givers are rapidly becoming alienated from all charitable interests. They are refusing to serve on charitable boards, and are withholding their money from benevolent objects. To put the question on the lowest possible plane, it *pays* charities to be co-operative.

Another bar to charitable co-operation, when we are foolish enough to permit him to become such, is the applicant. Sometimes he is stupid, and repeats messages incorrectly. Sometimes he is shrewd, and seeks his own advantage in getting two agencies at loggerheads. We should avoid sending an applicant from one charity office to another. It is bad for him, in the first place; and, when we send him home instead, we can communicate directly with the agency, state our reasons for so doing more clearly, and secure more intelligent action.

Turning from this more negative side of the subject, let us assume that charities have so far developed a corporate conscience that they are, for the most part, sincerely anxious to put poor people beyond the need of charity. For the most part, they are anxious; but their anxiety must make them jealously watchful of results before they will discover that one of the obstacles to this end is a lack of systematic communication among charities engaged in any form of relief work in families. When they make this discovery, they will not be satisfied that poor families shall escape from the dangers of duplicated and unrelated relief by a happy accident. They will not be satisfied until some means of confidential communication has been established among charities, assuring to each agency a prompt report of what the others are doing in each family.

Registration of relief, as it is called, has been highly developed in a few cities, and with good results. The objections to it have proven, in actual practice, to be unimportant or mistaken. In Boston, where many agencies that held aloof at first have been induced to try it, nearly forty thousand confidential reports were received last year. Writing of the results of this exchange, Miss Frances Morse says, "We find registration justifying the belief of its projectors that it would afford positive information, would prevent the overlapping of relief, would save waste of time and effort by enabling societies to narrow their field and thus make their work more thorough, would detect imposture, and would make it possible so to map out the city that one could see what neighborhoods were most in need of improvement."

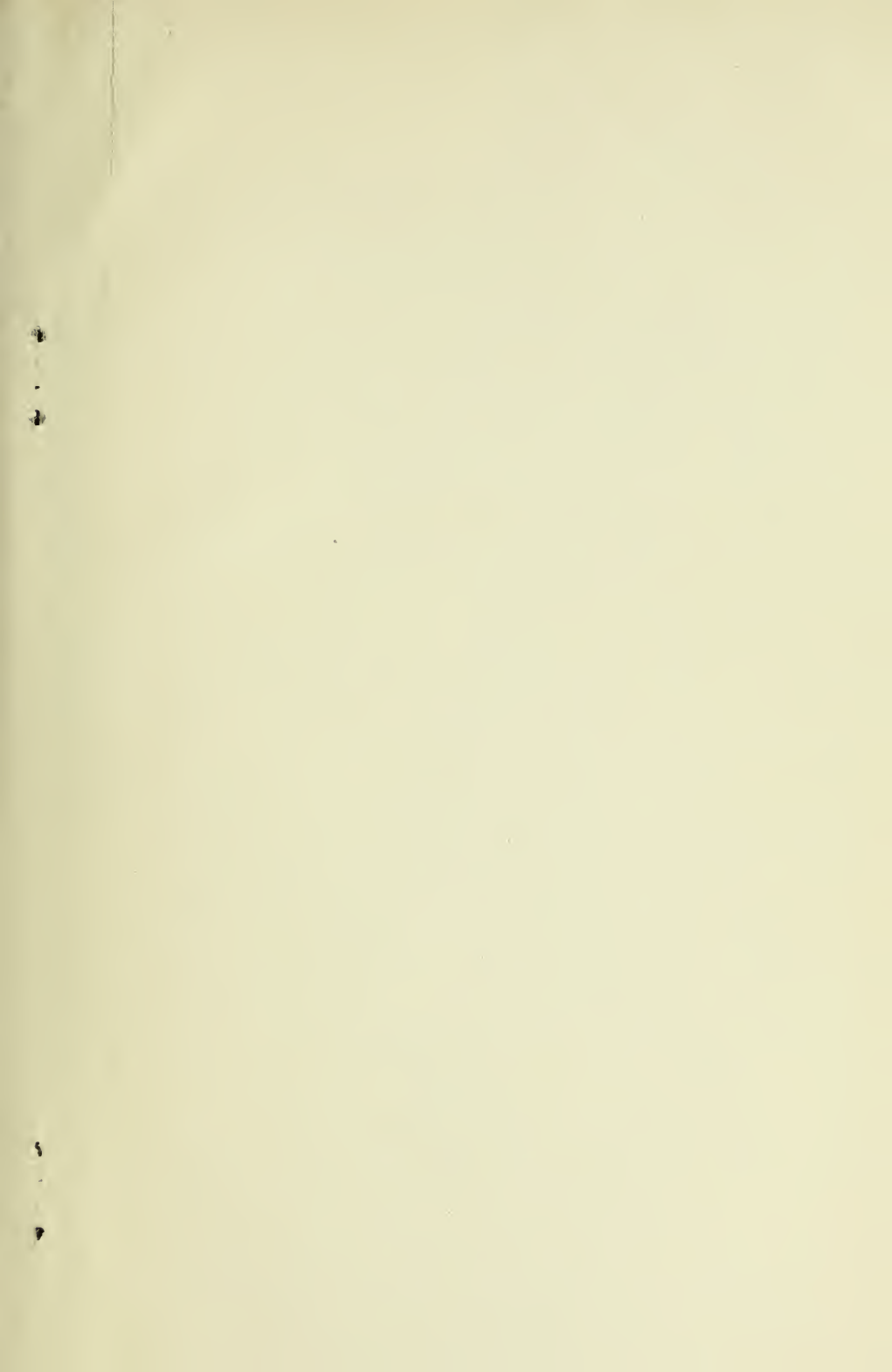
Another need that the co-operative spirit develops is a good directory of the charitable resources of the community. Such a book is indispensable to good work in a large city; for, through it, agencies may learn to avoid irritating blunders, and use each other more intelligently. A directory of charities is useful in two other ways. It brings to light needs that are not yet met by charity, so that existing agencies may work together to keep these needs before charitable testators and donors. It also shows in what direction the further development of charity is unnecessary. Often out of the sincerest desire to do good, and often, too, out of professional, denominational, or social rivalry, agencies are created for which there is no real need. People seem to have a passion for bringing charities into the world, and then leaving them without support. The death-rate among these weaklings is very heavy. Of all the charities established in Baltimore in four years, it was discovered that fifty-five per cent. had died within that time. The loss in money, time, and good temper that this implies, would have justified the community in charging a large debit against charity's account.

The co-operative spirit at work is an eminently practical spirit. Not satisfied with suppressing charities where they are not needed and developing them where they are, it will plan a division of labor among existing agencies upon the basis of allotting to each the part that it is best fitted to take. We have all recognized a certain child-like and engaging quality in Bottom's cry, "Let me play the lion, too." But when we see charities engaged in combining a home for the aged with an orphan asylum, or the feeding of the homeless with the

placing-out of children, or every imaginable sort of work with the relief of destitute families, we feel, like Peter Quince, that it is "enough to hang us all," and would say with him, "You can play no part but Pyramus." Then, if we are wise, we shall add (for Quince had the co-operative spirit), "Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man as one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely, gentlemanlike man: therefore, you must needs play Pyramus." This queer combination of unrelated work in one society is the survival of a cruder stage of development. As our charity becomes more highly organized, it must disappear.

We have passed hastily in review some methods of charitable co-operation,—co-operation with the poor, with the forces that surround them; co-operation among charities in the treatment of the individual case, in the registration of relief, in the development and repression of charitable activity, and in the division of labor. We have seen that the highest and best co-operation is based upon a hearty acceptance of certain principles underlying charitable action; but, if two charities agree about anything, they can and should co-operate. It is not necessary to wait until they agree about everything. By making the most of their agreements and minimizing their differences, they acquire the habit of co-operation; and only after this habit has been acquired can they hope to secure that basis of agreement upon which large charitable and legislative reforms are founded. An improvised co-operation is seldom effective, for the lack of real cohesion among agencies hastily called together to ward off some legislative danger is too apparent. But, when these same agencies have established the habit of working together over smaller tasks, they march upon Albany or Harrisburg or Springfield or Boston or Annapolis with every chance of victory. The first larger fruits of the co-operative spirit, as shown in better child-saving and better housing laws, give promise of a more abundant yield in the future.

The fruit will not be sound, however, unless it spring from the good ground of the individual case. We have had large crops of legislative bad fruit from those who have insisted upon beginning at the other end. Charitable co-operation begins and ends in an intimate knowledge of the needs of individual poor people and in the patient endeavor to make them permanently better off.



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